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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5689  
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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
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RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 0520  
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 4162  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 SEOUL 000541

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: PREL PGOV MARR ECON KPAO KMDR KS US  
SUBJECT: SEOUL - MEDIA REACTION

G20 Summit: ROK-U.S. Summit

"A "Stern and Unified" Message from Lee and Obama"

Conservative Chosun Ilbo editorial (04/03): "The ROK and the U.S. pledged to push for a "stern and unified" international response against North Korea. However, actually imposing UN sanctions on North Korea could be a daunting task given China and Russia's lukewarm attitude. The two countries should make sure that the UN Security Council sanctions North Korea for its rocket launch. Also, the ROK and the U.S. should explore every possible avenue to block North Korea's further provocations following its missile launch."

"Lee and Obama Summit Should Go Beyond Diplomatic Rhetoric"

Conservative Dong-a Ilbo editorial (04/03): "In the first summit between President Lee Myung-bak and U.S. President Barack Obama, the two leaders reaffirmed the strong alliance and pledged to cooperate on the North Korean rocket launch and KORUS FTA issues. The two leaders should deliver on the statements that they made during the summit. Otherwise, these statements will end up becoming empty diplomatic rhetoric."

"ROK and U.S. Summit Reaffirms Joint Response to North Korea's Rocket Launch"

Moderate Hankook Ilbo editorial (04/03): "As North Korea has begun fueling the rocket despite strong warnings from the international community, the nation's imminent rocket launch has almost become a reality. The ROK and U.S. Presidents reaffirmed that North Korea's rocket launch would violate UN Security Council Resolution 1718 and agreed to closely cooperate to prepare a stern response. Alternative means, rather than military action, could be more effective at putting pressure on the North."

"A Realistic Response to North Korea"

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun editorial (04/03): "A Blue House official announced that during a bilateral summit, President Lee Myung-bak and U.S. President Barack Obama agreed to cooperate on the complete and verifiable dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear

programs. They also agreed to put forth a "strict and united" response should the North launch a long-range missile, asserting that the international community also needs to put forth a "strict and united" response. One high-ranking government official explained that the leaders would see to it that the United Nations Security Council discusses any missile launch, and that they would continue to work for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks. They sought this understanding because China and Russia oppose UN sanctions and the U.S. wants to place greater weight on resolving the issue of North Korea's nuclear and missile capabilities through dialogue. This joint response, then, is a realistic one."

"ROK and U.S. Summit Reaffirms Cooperation on North Korean Rocket Launch and KORUS FTA Issues"

Moderate Seoul Shinmun editorial (04/03): "During his summit with President Lee, President Obama said that he is "preparing a UN Security Council resolution sanctioning North Korea." Because this is the first time that President Obama has directly mentioned a North Korea-related matter since taking office, we can attribute a fair amount of political weight to it. President Obama's statement is expected to put considerable pressure on the North. During the summit, President Obama reaffirmed the strength of the ROK-U.S. alliance by stating that the ROK is "one of America's closest allies and greatest friends." We hope that the two leaders will build upon this initial meeting and further solidify the ROK-U.S. alliance at the Washington summit in June."

SEOUL 00000541 002 OF 002

STEPHENS